

## A Critical Comparison on the Origin of Cosmos in Islam, Christianity and Modern Science

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### Abstract

*People acknowledge the effort of Modern science in bringing cosmos into reality. The research made in space has made what was once considered impossible possible and has opened the cosmos wide for further investigations and discoveries. Modern western empirical science has surely been the most impressive intellectual development since the 16<sup>th</sup> century. But this cannot of course negate the role of religion which has been around for much longer than that and is still flourishing to date despite a sustained complain to stamp it out of human orbit. Hence, none can deny the contributions of theology represented by religion on the one hand, and that of modern science on the other, since time immemorial. Even though there are many important issues and questions in this discourse, this entry concentrates on just a few. Perhaps the most salient question is whether the relation between religion and science is characterized by conflict or by concord. Of course it is possible that there are conflict and concord, conflict along certain dimensions, concord along others. This is so because religion and science are definitive contemporary discussion of many issues surrounding our understanding of God and religious truth and experience in the scientific age. This is a significantly expanded and freshly revised version of Religion in an Age of Science. In order to narrow down the arguments the researcher deems it necessary to discuss only three parties highlighted in the above title. The main objective here is to accentuate the areas of agreement and disagreement in this regard, and find ways and means to harmonize theology and modern science for the betterment of the modern man. The researcher believes that despite the apparent contradictions between religion and science there are areas in which religious truths still needs to be validated if science is to be the yardstick of rationality based on reality.*

**Key Terms:** Comparative Cosmology, Qur'ānic Cosmology, Biblical Cosmology, Scientific Cosmology, Stephen Hawkins

### 1. Introduction

The journey of cosmology started when man began to question his surroundings including the universe. Questions like how, when and why the cosmos or the universe and this world have come into existence, what are their purposes, their significances, and their destined ends? All these have been asked by both the ancient and the modern man, though in varying degree. These, and some other perpetual questions, have challenged the human mind all through ages for different reasons and from various points of view.

This phenomenon of cosmos has triggered man to dedicate his life studying and researching the cosmos because he has been fascinated, by the mysteries of God and His creation, on one hand, and by the big explosion (Big bang) on the other especially by those who strongly vouch for that. There is no doubt that science and technology have now taken over literature and poetry which have been instruments of human expression and creativity in all cultures. Likewise, in this very age, it is human reason, logic, and science which have been given primacy and dominance. Thus, the researcher would like to find out, whether; there are still rooms for theological elucidation of the universe, as well as commonalities and differences between the three parties (Islam, Christianity and modern Science). This will

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include, among others, the impact of the shared aims and differences on man as a microcosm.

Based on above concept, the study focuses on the concepts surrounding both the origin and cosmogony of the universe according to Islam, Christianity and Modern Science. The word cosmos in its real sense is the world or universe regarded as an orderly or harmonious system,<sup>1</sup> while the term cosmology stands for “the study of the cosmic views in general and also for the specific view or collection of images held in religion or cultural tradition.”<sup>2</sup> Furthermore, it is referred to as “the scientific study of the universe considered as a whole.”<sup>3</sup> As for cosmogony, it is also one of the terms employed to describe the cosmos. This term (cosmogony) is a compound Greek term consisting of *Kosmos* and *genesis*. It is, in fact, a theory of the origin of cosmos or universe in mythical form, i.e. a characteristic feature of somewhat advanced degree of speculative thought.<sup>4</sup>

The facts revolving around the origin of the cosmos are vital and of great value to man since they will pave the way for providing him with not only the history of the world as such, but human history as well. A clear comprehension of man's origins may be one of the solutions that can help to resolve many differences and disparities that humanity as a whole experiences. Hence, the fundamental questions here are how an orderly or harmonious system came into being and what were the forces behind its existence? Secondly, what is the effect of that on humanity? How do people perceive and explain the existence of life in general? Different people have made attempts to answer these questions differently, but detailed accounts have been provided by these three parties, i.e. Islam, Christianity, and Modern Science. This, however, does not rule out the contributions of others including the Indians<sup>5</sup>, Chinese<sup>6</sup>, and their likes. However, a significant point that should be borne in mind while dealing with this issue in question is that, this attempt does not mean making science the adjudicator or evaluator of religion. This is because religion, at least as far as Islam is concerned, is divine while science is man-made, and thus, incomparable. Conversely, it is possible to argue that the origin of a thing is also the origin of all other origins especially when discussing the cosmos which is, indeed, the mother of all others.

In their answers to these fundamental questions, both religions (Islam and Christianity), on the one hand, and science, on the other, have taken great initiatives to pave the ways for the success and prosperity of mankind despite the dichotomies that exist between science and Christianity *per se*, and science and Islam in some areas, all have roles to play in as far as human behavior is concerned. Therefore, the contributions of both religion and science cannot be denied. All the three parties are considered vital and significant and have had great impact on the life of humanity from time immemorial. There are numerous and voluminous books, research works and articles addressing the issue of the cosmos that account for its significance to human life. Hence, both theology and science are fundamental subjects that will never be detached from men for all perpetuity, despite the fact that the current trend in the West is making an unfair attempt to favor science and abandoning anything else, including religion. It is very dangerous to discard religion because none can deny the major role played by religion in the domain and sphere of ethics without which no human society can exist in peace. This may be true of those religions which do not have significant contributions towards science or those that have disdained and scoffed at science and see the mutually inclusive relations between them. However, Islam being the complete way of life does not separate science from religion.

Most people, since science has taken control of many facets of life, are only familiar with information about the cosmos which they have conceived from the realm and domain of science. The problem here is how did this orderly and harmonious system come into being and what is the power behind it. This problem has caused all the three parties, i.e. Islam, Christianity, and modern science to come up with different explanations and elucidations which I deem it necessary to shed light on and to find out the areas of discrepancies and commonalities and their impact on human society.

The objective of this paper, therefore, is to find out the effect of the various interpretations of the origin of the cosmos on human society, and how far religion and modern science have answered the enquiries of man on the issue. Hence, the study draws a line of distinction between theology (Islam and Christianity), and science in this regard.

Thus, comparison of the above concepts pertaining to the emergence of the cosmos according to Islam, Christianity and modern science becomes very vital. As it examines, among others, the definitions and the concepts of cosmos, its origin and creation as presented by these three parties mentioned above. The researcher, deems it necessary at this particular point, to explore and make comparisons between sister religions that have many seeming similarities in respect of man and his ultimate goals, and to evaluate the veracity of their understanding of the truths revealed in them and to examine the validity of the perceptions of the scientific community on the ever-expanding horizon of cosmology and the cosmos. The term "in the light of modern science" does not in any way preclude the notion that 'modern science' is a yardstick or an adjudicator between the three parties. The reason for viewing the issue in this manner is because 'modern science' is perceived as religiously neutral to scientifically adjudicate the veracity of the religious truths concerning the cosmos. But this does not mean the scientific truths concerning the cosmos are absolute and final. What the modern science has fathomed thus far with its sophisticated tools and equipments is only the barest surface of the space outside the earth. It is yet to confirm the Heaven and Hell nor the Divine Canopy and Throne. So from the religious perspective modern science lacks the necessary prerequisite to be their judge. Nevertheless, human endeavors on cosmological studies achieved thus far should be considered sufficient to stand as a medium by which the veracity of the cosmological truth as espoused by these religions can be approximated. Therefore, it is pertinent that regular revisits of the issues from time and again will change people's perceptions and of course their worldviews including their attitudes and behaviors toward the world which is supposed to be the only best and inhabitable place for God's chosen creature man. Thus, the comparison is done in order to delineate the valid and reliable arguments about the origin of this complex phenomenon that we live in and depend upon which is believed to be the instrument creating and shaping various worldviews. This is because these three parties, in the opinion of this researcher, have offered remarkable accounts, more than others, on this significant and rather philosophical subject of the origin of cosmos, which is in fact the root of all other origins, including the worldviews cited above.

However, in order to facilitate a better grasp of the issue, tables of comparison have been designed where similarities have been highlighted by way of color-coding to denote agreement and disagreement in respect of the issues compared. In the tables that follow this text the areas of agreement are shown in yellow color with green indicating the differences in terms of elucidation. The blue color indicates on their distinct stand on particular issue, whereas the red indicates on their silence on the matter, while pink confirms their

similarities with slight differences. Table 1 studies the universe as a macrocosm while the Table 2 shows it as a microcosm.

**Table 1**

Comparison between the three parties (Islam, Christianity and Modern Science) with regard to Universe as Macrocosm

S#	Issue	Islam	Christianity	Science
<b>Macrocosm (The Universe)</b>				
1	Sources	Revelation	Revelation, And interpretation of scholars	Experimentation and observation.
2	Definition	The heaven and the earth and all that is between them <sup>7</sup> .	The heaven and the earth and all that is between them <sup>8</sup> .	Consists of all matter, energy, and space-time that we can ever detect or that will ever be able to affect us <sup>9</sup> .
	Synonyms	Al-‘ <i>Ólam</i> or Al-Duny <i>É</i> (The Worl d) <sup>10</sup>	The World <sup>11</sup>	The World <sup>12</sup>
		Al-‘ <i>Ólam</i> <i>Én</i> (The worlds) <sup>13</sup>	The Worlds <sup>14</sup> .	
		<i>SamÉ’</i> (Sky) <sup>15</sup>		
		<i>SamÉ’</i> (Firmament) <sup>16</sup>	Firmament <sup>17</sup>	
		<i>SamÉ’</i> (Universe) <sup>18</sup>		Universe <sup>19</sup> .
		<i>SamÉ’</i> (Heaven) <sup>20</sup>	Heaven <sup>21</sup>	
		Heaven and earth <sup>22</sup> .	Heaven and Earth <sup>23</sup> .	
		Al-Saqf (Canopy) <sup>24</sup> .		
				The cosmos <sup>25</sup>
3	The reality behind the origin of the cosmos	Regarded as a miracle (metaphysical) that could not be comprehended by reason <sup>26</sup>	Regarded as a miracle (metaphysical) that could not be comprehended by reason <sup>27</sup> .	
4	Duration of Creation	In a period of six (6) days <sup>28</sup> .	In a period of six (6) days <sup>29</sup> .	Unfixed period of time.
	Manner of Creation	God says: <i>Kun Fa Yakun</i> <sup>30</sup> (Be and its becomes)	[No mention of it] <sup>31</sup> .	As a result of the reaction of Big Bang <sup>32</sup> .
	Reason for Creation	For the purpose of serving man’s need <sup>33</sup>		
5	Creation / origin or evolution of cosmos.	Created by God <sup>34</sup> .	Created by God <sup>35</sup> .	Evolved by itself <sup>36</sup> .
	Manner of origin	Explosion or Chaos		Explosion or Chaos
		Clove asunder		(Big Bang)
	Creation Process or	Celestial bodies were one unit (Primary		Celestial bodies were in gaseous

	operation.	Nebula) before being cloven asunder. Then to gaseous form before formation of the planets <sup>37</sup> .		form before formation then became one unit (Primary Nebula) before being clove asunder. (Big Bang) <sup>38</sup> .
	Creation progression or development.	Gradually formed	Consecutive or Successive development	Gradually formed
		in a period of six (6) days	in a period of six days (6)	
		but not depending on the movement of the planets, rather on Allah's time determination <sup>39</sup> .	depending on the movement of the planets <sup>40</sup> .	but depending on the movement of the planets. Thus, Various times or periods offered: some say five (5) billion years, according to others, twenty (20) million years, yet others claim that it is few hundred of years and others argue and gave a flat statement that it is billion of years <sup>41</sup> .
6	Position of the Mother Earth	Swimming in the space <sup>42</sup> .	Geocentric and motionless <sup>43</sup> .	(From) Geocentric to Heliocentric (The Sun but not the Earth is in the Center of the universe) to elliptical where the sun is at one focus <sup>44</sup> .
7	Division of heaven	Divided	Divided	
		into seven <sup>45</sup> (7)	into three(3) <sup>46</sup>	Not fixed <sup>47</sup> .
8	Task of the moon	Reflection of the light Produced by the Sun <sup>48</sup> .	On the contrary, its function is production of light also just like the sun <sup>49</sup> .	Reflection of the light Produced by the Sun <sup>50</sup> .
9	Task of the mountains	Stabilization of the earth <sup>51</sup> .	Not mentioned though there are reflections about pillars of heaven and the like <sup>52</sup> .	Stabilization of the earth <sup>53</sup> .
10	Expansion of the universe	It (the universe) expands <sup>54</sup> .		It (the universe) expands <sup>55</sup> .
	Human	Human space venture	Does not provide any	Human space

11	venture in Space	is beyond the Solar system. The Prophet's ascension to heaven is a clear example on this. He not only traversed the solar system but he was taken to the ultimate Lote-tree which beyond the confines of the universe and that too the journey took place both physically and spiritually together. The surprising thing is that the Prophet was able to return to earth within a shortest possible time. <sup>56</sup>	space venture except that Jesus descended from the heaven. <sup>57</sup>	venture is strictly confined to the solar system with attempt to establish a permanent space station above the earth and in selected planets in the solar system. Future aspiration includes landing on a moving asteroids. This will certainly involve energy source that is beyond the capacity of earth. Perhaps tapping the immense resources of other planets like Jupiter and Neptune may help in man's space exploratory adventures. <sup>58</sup>
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Table 2: Comparison between the three parties (Islam, Christianity and Modern Science) with regard to universe as microcosm

S/N	Issue	Islam	Christianity	Science
microcosm (Man)				
12	The nature of man.	Man is part of the universe (Creation of God) <sup>59</sup> .	Man is part of the universe (Creation of God) <sup>60</sup> .	The outcome of Evolution- refuted by others. Thus, no answer <sup>61</sup> .
	Developmental process (Embryology)	Man develops from sperm to zygote to born to flesh <sup>62</sup> .		Man develops from sperm to zygote to born to flesh <sup>63</sup> .
	Sex determination	By Male –Sperm <sup>64</sup>		By Male- Sperm <sup>65</sup>
	Protection of the fetus	3 veils protecting the fetus <sup>66</sup> .		3 veils protecting the fetus (1) Anterior abdominal wall of the mother, (2) the uterine wall, and (3) the amino chorionic membrane) <sup>67</sup> .
13	Other living community of beings in the cosmos.	- Terrestrial Beings: Birds and Animal (living in a community, and insects like ants	Though there is mention of such but no detail account <sup>69</sup> .	Terrestrial beings: Birds and Animal (living in a community, and insects like ants communicate and do a

		communicate and do a lot together) <sup>68</sup> .		lot together) <sup>70</sup> .
		-Celestial Beings: Angels and Jins are found in the subtle world or the unseen realm.	-Celestial Beings: Angels and Jins are found in the subtle world or the unseen realm.	
14	Information about Angelology and the like.	Provides information Angelology and the like <sup>71</sup> .	Provides information Angelology and the like <sup>72</sup> .	
15	The boundary of the universe	is wider- provides information pertaining to ontology, metaphysics, Angelology and even Eschatology.	is wider - provides information pertaining to ontology, metaphysics, Angelology and even Eschatology	The boundary of the cosmos of the modern science is diminutive and limited focusing only on the physical world.
16	The fate of the universe	Will come to an end but in a violent mode <sup>73</sup>	Will come to an end but in a violent mode <sup>74</sup>	Will come to an end but in a violent mode refer to as a big crunch or otherwise i.e.; in an expanding manner <sup>75</sup>
	End of the Universe	No one knows except God <sup>76</sup>	No one knows except God <sup>77</sup>	Have given some bizarre number of years in billions which is difficult to compute <sup>78</sup>
	Life in planets other than the earth	There is no specific mention of such. However the possibility of being other than man is possible to be found in the universe like Jinns and angels which are the domain of spirituality.	There is no specific mention of such. However the possibility of being other than man is possible to be found in the universe like Jinns and angels which are the domain of spirituality.	Some rudimentary scientific studies have confirmed the plausible presence of life in planets other than the earth but did not mention them in terms of Jinns or angels.
	Human survival in space			Survival is possible with creating earthly condition, which is impossible to maintain at the current level of man's achievement <sup>79</sup> .

As it can be seen from the above table, the discussion on this subject can be broadly categorized under the following categories wherein the positions of the three parties,

namely, Islam (**I**), Christianity (**C**) and Modern Science (**M**) are compared to give a contrasting view on their respective views on the various aspects of cosmological facts. The Table 3 below together with the explanations that follow illustrates the above statement. In elucidating the various stand points of view, the researcher has employed the following signs:

**Table 3**  
Comparative areas of Agreement and Disagreement

✓	X	O	*
Agreement	Disagreement	Non-Committal	Committal

  

Cosmological Position	I	C	M
<b>Areas of Agreement</b>			
I, C and M are in unanimous agreement	✓	✓	✓
<b>Areas of Disagreement</b>			
I and C agree but disagreed by M	✓	✓	x
I and M agree but disagreed by C	✓	x	✓
C and M agree but disagreed by I	X	✓	✓
No agreement among the three parties	X	x	x
<b>Areas of Non-Committal</b>			
I and C are non-committal as opposed to M	O	o	*
I and M are non-committal as opposed to C	O	*	o
C and M are non-committal as opposed to I	*	o	o
All three parties are non-committal	*	*	*

**2. Areas of agreement**

As mentioned above the areas of agreement can be viewed within the following framework: [a] areas of agreement among all three parties, and [b] areas where the agreement is only between any two parties as opposed to any one of them.



## 2.1. Areas of agreement by all three parties

In these areas, two points of unanimous agreement have been identified among all the three parties, which include (a) the world having a definite beginning, and (b) its eventual end in a violent mode, although not known precisely as to when this will occur<sup>80</sup>.

## 2.2. Areas agreed by both I and C but disagreed by M

Bearing the name religion of God, both **I** and **C** have certain similarities that they share between them. But this does not mean that they agree on each and everything. Among the issues agreed by both **I** and **C**, are: (a) the cosmos as a creation of God, which **M** claims to have evolved by itself<sup>81</sup>, (b) the cosmos having a metaphysical nature that cannot be comprehended by pure reason as opposed to the predominant view held by **M** which is based on experiments and observation that limits it to the confine of reasoning<sup>82</sup>, (c) the time and the cause for the evolvement and end of the world are all determined by God and depend entirely on His decree and action as opposed to **M** which believes that God could not intervene in the universe to break the laws that govern it<sup>83</sup>, and (d) making man, a creation of God, the essential part of the universe (microcosm) as opposed to **M** which does not have any such explanation to it apart from the evolution theory<sup>84</sup>.

## 2.3. Areas agreed by both I and M but disagreed by C

Contrary to the above categorization, there are views in which **I** agrees with the fact established by **M** but same has not been confirmed by **C**. Such views, among others, include, (a) the gradual formation and development of the cosmos which according to **C** was formed in succession<sup>85</sup>, (b) the function of the moon is to reflect light, whereas **C** views it as another producer of light just as the sun<sup>86</sup>, and (c) the movement of the planets in the space and the disqualification of theories of Geocentric including Heliocentric views on the status of earth as opposed to the views of **C** where the earth is pictured as the epicenter of the universe<sup>87</sup>.

## 2.4. Areas agreed by both C and M but disagreed by I

Apart from the above categorization, there are points in which **I** disagrees with the joint stand taken by both **C** and **M** in respect of the period of progression or development of creation as determined by the movement of the planets to which **C** assigned six days which **M** does not subscribe to. However, the view of **I** is that it concurs with the six days of creation but does not endorse the progression to the movement of the planets.

## 3. Areas of disagreement

In this area one may find two parties agreeing on certain issue while the other party does not conform to them. All these cases of disagreements have been adequately addressed in some details in the earlier section.

### 3.1. Areas of Disagreement among all the Three Parties

These are the areas where all the three parties could not agree, and these include, (a) the derivation of information regarding the reality behind the cosmos which according to **I** is from revelation alone, while **C** accords from revelation and human hunches or reason, whereas **M** rejects revelation all together by confining the sources to experimentation and observation, (b) even though **I** and **C** agree on the division of heaven, they nevertheless, disagree on the limit of such division which according to **I** stands at 7 which **C** confirms it as 3, as opposed to the views of **M** which does not comment on such division.

#### 4. Areas of non-committal (silence)

These are the areas where no information about the creation phenomenon is given. This includes among others, areas where two parties offer some information concerning the cosmos while the other party is silent. It also covers areas where all the concerned parties do not provide anything related to cosmos.

##### 4.1. Areas of Non-Committal (Silence) by a Particular Party

These include the following areas where **I** and **C** have both offered something pertaining to the cosmos while **M** is silent. For instance, (a) the fixed period of time for the formation of the universe which according to both **I** and **C** as being six (6) days, whereas **M** is silent<sup>88</sup>, (b) the usage of terms the Heaven and the Earth as synonyms of “the universe” by both **I** and **C** as opposed to **M**<sup>89</sup>, (c) **M** is silent on information pertaining to the celestial beings in the subtle world, yet, **I** and **C** have contributed to that by giving sufficient information about angelology, the *jinn*s and their likes thereby making the boundary of religious cosmos wider<sup>90</sup>, (d) both **I** and **C** have gone beyond this very cosmos by highlighting the stages and situations after the end or annihilation of the universe (eschatology) whereas **M** does not say anything related to this phenomenon<sup>91</sup>, (e) both **I** and **M** have supplied us with reports about the manner of creation of the universe and the process or operation related to it excluding **C**<sup>92</sup>, (f) **C** is also found silent insofar as the expansion of the universe is concerned while both **I** and **M** have confirmed the continuous expansion of the universe<sup>93</sup>, and (g) the developmental process of man (embryology) as microcosm, his sex determination, and the protection of the fetus are confirmed by both **I** and **M**, but the same are not provided by **C**<sup>94</sup>.

With regard to human space venture and possible life in space both **I** and **M** have attempted to materialize them in their own methods of operation, whereas **C** does not have any explanation on this. In the case of **I** the Prophetic ascension to the precinct of God both in physical and spiritual sense is a standing testimony to the possibility of human venture into the wider space, which has been physically and materially made possible by the advance of space technology in recent times. However, to fathom the entire universe traversed by the Prophet at the invitation of the Divine Himself is a herculean task for modern science to accomplish.

##### 4.2. Areas of Complete Non-Committal (Silence) by all the Three Parties.

Despite these various approaches to address the multidimensional issues pertaining to the cosmos, there are still areas in which none of these three parties have supplied us with any information. These issues include, among others, (a) the lack of information about the duration of the lifespan of the universe<sup>95</sup>, (b) the life expectancy<sup>96</sup>, and (c) its size even though **I** and **M** have, as mentioned above, confirmed the continuous expansion of the universe.

#### 5. Areas of distinct stand on particular issue by a particular party

This is the area claimed by a particular party but not shared by any other. Among the issues in this respect as per their stand are: (a) It is **I** alone which uses terms *samāʾ*, as synonyms to mean a number of concepts including firmament, cosmos, canopy, sky and heaven, and it is alone that distinguishes itself by providing information related to Allah’s determination of the period of time for the formation of the cosmos, as well as the swimming or “orbiting” of the planets in the space, (b) **C** is the only one which claims that the light of the moon is a

reflected light and that the creation process or development was a consecutive or successive other than gradual, and (c) M maintains that the entire information provided, in relation to the cosmos, can be exclusively derived from experimentation and observation.

Moreover the claim made by M against the other parties regarding the origin of man as a product of evolution has made its position totally different from the rest. The major contribution of M is by providing the world with reports about the number of planets. It also offers information about the map of the world which contains the six continents, including the time for both eclipse of the sun and that of the moon and the like which the religious cosmology (in this regard I and C) does not offer. This has made M peculiar that even in the changing of what is already established as scientific fact in relation to the cosmos i.e. from Geocentric to Heliocentric to No-centric has left its mark of distinction rather convincingly.

## 6. Conclusion

As it can be seen from the preceding elucidations that there is no one who can deny the contributions of religion on the one hand, and that of modern science on the other. This is so evident in respect of cosmology as well as in ethical and moral development on the one hand, and in physical progress and nourishment of the entire world, including human affairs on the other. With the advancement of science and technology, the world has been turned into what is now referred to as a *global village*, a reality which speaks for itself. However, these advancements will be devoid of any sensible meaning if it is pursued without religion and ethical or moral conducts.

Hence, there is indeed a great need for the harmonization of the three parties. Einstein is reported to have said “*science without religion is lame, and religion without science is blind.*”<sup>7</sup> This is because, as seen from the earlier table of contrast and comparison, it has been found that there are areas where religion has superseded science despite the latter making great stride in technological advancement through the scientific method of experimentation and observation. Meanwhile, as it can be seen from the table, there are also areas in cosmology elaborated by science that have not been highlighted by theology. Thus, harmonization of these seemingly irreconcilable parties becomes imperative, though the possibility of such a harmony might be impaired by Christianity which has deep-rooted compatibility issue with the modern science in various areas cited in the table.

Perhaps this unflinching stand of Christianity to accept scientific evidences that run contrary to their biblical truth, which they intend to protect by all cost compels the advocates and interlocutors of modern science to abandon religion all together. Contrary to stand taken by Christianity, Islam took a pro-science stance from the very beginning by embracing it. The greatest challenge for the science and the scientific world is to challenge the cosmological Islam with more concrete and tangible evidence. Mere presumptive mathematical calculations running into billions and trillions or even zillions of light years can only add more zeros to the already zero knowledge of the cosmos. Science should be able to give some concrete numbers to the “circumference” of the universe just as the Muslims gave the circumference of the earth without being there measuring it.

Furthermore, it is important for the world religions, in this case Islam and Christianity, to withstand the challenges posed by modern science, including the shaping of the worldview and attitude of people, through ‘*religionization*’ of modern science, (by this we mean instilling of spiritual values into modern science). There is a dire need to infuse spiritual

dimension into modern science, as scientific obsession has divorced morality and ethics from its pursuit after truth. It is religion through the aid of revelation that can instill such finer qualities in man. However, the strict and meticulous scientific methods of observation and experimentation are found lacking in religious explanation of the cosmos. Relying only and solely on revelational truth without making any effort to scientifically verify the veracity of such truth will keep human mind sterile and subservient. This will have serious impact on the desire for an all-round human progress.

This lack of enthusiasm on the part of religious elites to undertake serious scientific study has given '*modern science*' the free rein to dictate the course of events that affect almost everything. While, the reality remains that modern science is not a yardstick to measure everything since it has failed even to provide us with information pertaining to the origin of the cosmos, the purpose of our existence, and as well as our fate and that of the universe. It (modern science) is unable to explain where we (mankind) came from, including of course the animals and the rest of the creatures. It could not elucidate the purpose of our existence, as well as the fate and destiny of the universe including the creatures contained therein. With its surface knowledge of the cosmos, modern science is not in a position to provide us with information relating to the unseen world, as well as the first entity to exist. Furthermore, eschatology and the continuation of life after this transitory and temporary world have only been explained by none other than theologians through the aid of revelation.

Modern science, despite its numerous commendable inventions aimed at improving the lot of man has also invariably and inadvertently has opened the door for many of the present day calamities. The introduction of new technology in the areas of sustaining life support systems, organ transplantation, bio-technological parenting, cloning, and acquired immune deficiency syndrome i.e. diseases like aids, gonorrhoea, syphilis, etc as well as global warming are highly encouraging but are seriously flawed as they lack ethical and spiritual bearings. All these are but the outcome of immoral behaviour caused by lack of God-fearing. There is no difference between a gun and a syringe used by a physician for his dying patient. Both are weapons of death, no matter what the intention of the killer was. Another kind of killing or murder is abortion. Abortion of a viable foetus is considered as infanticide except when necessity arises like saving the life of the mother. Even in such a situation, every attempt should be made to save both lives. Therefore, there is indeed a great need to control this unfettered freedom provided to science.

However, as far as Islam is concerned, it is the notion and the action of resorting to the 'Islamization of human knowledge' that will, in one way or the other, shield those challenges and confrontations thrown at it by modern science. Through Islamization of human knowledge the advancement made by modern science can be critically examined and accepted if they are in conformity with the revealed sources. In this respect it would be better for the Christian world to join hand with Islam to work together in the arriving at the truths in order to save the human community from the tragedy posed by misguidedly adventurous modern science. Such a meeting of minds could only be made possible by institutions like the '*United Nations*' (UN), which could at least or its sister organization like Unesco to initiate a department to study modern science through the lens of religious scripts with invested authority to save humanity and the entire world from the danger posed by modern science and its daring adventures.

Harmony is highly recommended here between science and theology. Despite the fact that modern science has unveiled the mysteries of nature and made a lot of discoveries, it cannot create ends nor reach reality through science or intellects alone. Thus, there is a dire need to understand the spiritual interpretation of the universe provided by the theologians which was neglected by modern science.

There is no doubt that it is due to man's actions and deeds, both theologically or spiritually and as well as scientifically, that the world we live in experiences things like pollution, the total unrest, the global-warming and the like. Hence a call for both scientific and spiritual interpretations of the cosmos is essential. We need that kind of science which can live alongside with religion and at the same time produce an environment that can help men and women to live in peace and tranquility within themselves and the environment. That is indeed what is meant by the natural environment, and, above all, the 'Divine reality' which is the ontological source of both micro and macrocosms i.e. man and the cosmos that is highly deemed indispensable for the betterment of the entire cosmos.

### Endnotes

- <sup>1</sup> Hornby, A. S., Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary (China: Oxford University Press, 7<sup>th</sup> Edn., 2007), 344.
- <sup>2</sup> Bolle, Kees W. "Cosmology". In The Encyclopedia of Religion. Edited by Lindsay Jones, Macmillan Library Reference USA. (New York: Thomson Gale, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn., 1987/2005), 1991.
- <sup>3</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>4</sup> James, E. O., Creation and Cosmology: A Historical and Comparative Inquiry (Leiden: E.J Brill, 1969), 3.
- <sup>5</sup> Kak, Subhash C. "Birth and Early Development of Indian Astronomy", in Helaine Selin, Astronomy Across Cultures: The History of Non-Western Astronomy (Boston: Kluwer, 2000), 303-340; and Warren, William, F., "Problem still unsolved in Indian-Aryan Cosmology" in JAOS, vol.26 (1905), pp 84-92.
- <sup>6</sup> Pan, Li-chi, Concepts of the Cosmos in Ancient Times (Jamaica, N.Y.: Center of Asian Studies, St. John's University, 1974); and Tseng, Lillian Lan-ying, Picturing heaven in early China (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Asia Center for the Harvard-Yenching Institute, Harvard University Press, 2011).
- <sup>7</sup> Qur'ān (26: 24)
- <sup>8</sup> Bible (Genesis. 1: 1-2)
- <sup>9</sup> Neil, Discovering the universe, op.cit., 498.
- <sup>10</sup> Qur'ān (2: 86 and 201). Interestingly the Qur'ān does not employ the term al-'Ōlam to mean the world, even though it has used its plural form to mean the worlds. However this term has been used in the hadith of the Prophet to refer to the world.
- <sup>11</sup> Bible (Genesis. 1: 1-2) and (Isaiah. 23: 17 )
- <sup>12</sup> Seeds, The Solar System, op.cit., 64.
- <sup>13</sup> Qur'ān (1: 2 and 2: 13 1)
- <sup>14</sup> Bible (Hebrew. 1: 2)
- <sup>15</sup> Qur'ān (52: 9)
- <sup>16</sup> Ibid. (78: 12)
- <sup>17</sup> Bible (Gen. 6-8)
- <sup>18</sup> Qur'ān (51: 47)

- <sup>19</sup> Cynthia, *The Everything Astronomy*, op.cit., 39
- <sup>20</sup> Qur'ān (51: 22)
- <sup>21</sup> Bible (Matthew. 11-11) and (Rev.19: 14)
- <sup>22</sup> Qur'ān (26: 24)
- <sup>23</sup> Bible (Matthew. 24: 34-35)
- <sup>24</sup> Qur'ān (21: 32)
- <sup>25</sup> James, *Creation and Cosmology*, op.cit., 3.
- <sup>26</sup> Qur'ān (18: 51)
- <sup>27</sup> Bible (Hebrews. 11: 3)
- <sup>28</sup> Qur'ān (32: 4) and (25: 59)
- <sup>29</sup> Bible (Genesis. 1: 31)
- <sup>30</sup> Qur'ān (36: 82)
- <sup>31</sup> Bible (Genesis. 1: 1) says "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters".
- <sup>32</sup> Cynthia, *The Everything Astronomy*, op.cit., 39.
- <sup>33</sup> Qur'ān (2: 22 and 29)
- <sup>34</sup> Ibid. (32: 4)
- <sup>35</sup> Bible (Genesis. 1: 1). (It is not easy to identify that God in this respect).
- <sup>36</sup> Cynthia, *The Everything Astronomy*, op.cit., 39.
- <sup>37</sup> Qur'ān (21: 30) and (41: 9-12)
- <sup>38</sup> McMillan, *Astronomy Today*, op.cit., 714.
- <sup>39</sup> Qur'ān (22: 47) and (25: 59)
- <sup>40</sup> Bible (Genesis. 1: 1-31)
- <sup>41</sup> Cynthia, *The Everything Astronomy*, op.cit., 39; McMillan, *Astronomy Today*, op.cit., 4, Riordan, *The Shadows of Creation*, op.cit., 3, Seeds, *Perspectives on Astronomy*, op.cit., 243. Commenting on the age of the universe, Weintarub observes that an age of 13.4 to 14 billion years is very likely. This presumption is certainly far from reality. (David A. Weintraub, *How Old is the Universe*, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2011), 363.
- <sup>42</sup> Qur'ān (21: 33) and (36: 40)
- <sup>43</sup> Bible (Ecclesiastes 1: 5) and (Psalms 93: 1)
- <sup>44</sup> Cynthia, *The Everything Astronomy*, op.cit., 18-27
- <sup>45</sup> Here by seven is meant multiplication (to be more). It means that He has created many heavens. Mostly it so happens that, in Arabic language, the mention of number seven is done in the sense of plenty or infinitive. It means that a number is mentioned but no definite quantity is meant. It means that a number is mentioned but no definite quantity is meant. The purpose of saying is to convey plenty. It is obvious; here seven indicates plenty towards infinity. However, According to al-Rāzi, mentioning a particular or specific number does not negate the possibility of being more. Al-Rāzi, *Tafsīr al-Kabīr* (Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, 1985), Vol.1, pp 170-173
- <sup>46</sup> Bible (2Corinthians.12: 1-4).
- <sup>47</sup> (Not mentioned, thus, not fixed). This could also mean that modern science does not believe in it since the basis of physical prove is not established.
- <sup>48</sup> Qur'ān (10: 5) (25: 61) and (71: 15-16).

- <sup>49</sup> Bible (Genesis. 1: 16) and (Isaiah. 30: 26) and (Matthew. 24: 29).
- <sup>50</sup> Michael, Zeilik, *Astronomy the Evolving Universe* (New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1997), 179.
- <sup>51</sup> Qur'ān (21: 31) and (78: 7).
- <sup>52</sup> Bible (Genesis. 1: 5-8) and (Gen. 1: 9-13) and (Rev. 6: 15).
- <sup>53</sup> Press, Frank, and Siever, Raymond, *Earth* (W. H Freeman: 1986), 345
- <sup>54</sup> Qur'ān (51: 47). See also a book entitled *Quantum Religion* by Sylvester Steffen, page 195.
- <sup>55</sup> Hawking, *History of Time*, op.cit., 39.
- <sup>56</sup> Qur'ān (17: 1).
- <sup>57</sup> Bible (Acts 1: 9-11)
- <sup>58</sup> For details on future space exploration, visit <http://www.nasa.gov/exploration/home/index.html>. accessed on 20th October 2011.
- <sup>59</sup> Qur'ān (32: 7).
- <sup>60</sup> Bible (Genesis. 1: 27).
- <sup>61</sup> Darwin, *The Origin*, op.cit., 22.
- <sup>62</sup> Qur'ān (53: 45-46) (75: 37-39) and (76: 2).
- <sup>63</sup> Moore, Keith L. *The Developing Human* (Philadelphia: W.B Saunders Company, 4<sup>th</sup> Edn, 1988), 8.
- <sup>64</sup> Qur'ān (53: 45-46) and (75: 37-39).
- <sup>65</sup> Feldman, Robert S. *Development across the Life Span* (New Jersey: Pearson Education Inc., 2008), 50.
- <sup>66</sup> Qur'ān (39: 6),
- <sup>67</sup> Naik, Zakir, *Modern Science*, op.cit., 54-56
- <sup>68</sup> Qur'ān (6: 38) and (27: 18)
- <sup>69</sup> (Matthew. 6: 26)
- <sup>70</sup> Naik, Zakir, *Modern Science*, op.cit., 43-44).
- <sup>71</sup> Qur'ān (35: 1).
- <sup>72</sup> (Matthew. 22: 30) and (Hebrews. 12: 22-23).
- <sup>73</sup> Qur'ān. 81: 1-14).
- <sup>74</sup> (Matthew 24: 21). and (Dan 12: 4)
- <sup>75</sup> Cynthia, *The Everything Astronomy*, op.cit., 244
- <sup>76</sup> Qur'ān (31: 34).
- <sup>77</sup> (Mark 13:32) and (Matthew 24:36-37)
- <sup>78</sup> McMillan, *Astronomy Today*, op.cit., 714
- <sup>79</sup> Jeffery, Benet, and Megan, Donahue, *Cosmic Perspective*, (New York: Pearson and Addison Wesley, 2007), 207
- <sup>80</sup> Qur'ān (81: 1-14), Bible (Matt. 24; 21) (Dan.12: 4), and Cynthia, *The Everything Astronomy*, op.cit., 244.
- <sup>81</sup> Qur'ān (27: 64), Bible (Gen.1: 1), and Bennett, *The Cosmic Perspective*, op.cit., 2
- <sup>82</sup> Qur'ān (18: 51), Bible (Hebrews.11: 3).
- <sup>83</sup> Qur'ān (27: 64), Bible (Acts 1: 7), and Hawking, *History of Time*, op.cit., 146
- <sup>84</sup> Qur'ān (32: 7), Bible (Gen.1: 26-27), and Darwin, *The Origin*, op.cit., 22
- <sup>85</sup> Qur'ān (18: 51), and Michael A. Seeds, *Astronomy the System and Beyond* (Belmont: Thomson Books / Cole, 2007), 127

- <sup>86</sup> Qur'ān (25: 61) and (10: 5), and Michael Zeilik, *Astronomy The Evolving Universe* (New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1997), 179
- <sup>87</sup> Qur'ān (36: 40), and Cynthia, *The Everything Astronomy*, op.cit., 18: 27
- <sup>88</sup> Qur'ān (32: 4) (25: 59), and Bible (Gen. 1: 31).
- <sup>89</sup> Qur'ān (26: 24), Bible (Matt.24: 34-35).
- <sup>90</sup> Qur'ān (35: 1) (6: 158), and Bible (Matt.24: 21) (Dan. 12: 4).
- <sup>91</sup> Qur'ān (39: 68-75), and Bible (John. 5: 28-29) and (2Cor. 5: 1).
- <sup>92</sup> Qur'ān, (41: 9-12), and A.C Fabian, op.cit.1
- <sup>93</sup> Qur'ān (51: 47) and Livio, Mario, *The Accelerating Universe* (New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 2000), 43
- <sup>94</sup> Qur'ān (76: 2) (75: 37-39) (53: 45-46), and Moore, *The Developing Human*, op.cit., 8.
- <sup>95</sup> Qur'ān (18: 51) and Bible (Herr: 11: 3). Cynthia, *The Everything Astronomy*, op.cit., 39, McMillan, *Astronomy Today*, op.cit., 4, Riordan, *The Shadows of Creation*, op.cit., 3, Backman, *Perspectives on Astronomy*, op.cit., 243
- <sup>96</sup> Qur'ān (31: 34) (43: 85), Bible (Mark. 13: 32) and (Acts. 17).
- <sup>97</sup> Einstein, Albert, *Ideas and Opinions* (New York/ Avenel, New Jersey: Wings Books, 1954), 46.

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